

The Romance Hero Characteristics

(medieval descendant of the epic hero)

1

- Usually born under mysterious circumstances
- Grows up in obscurity
- Undergoes a childhood initiation involving a magic weapon
- In maturity, fights to defeat evil and promote peace
- Aided by magic weapons and wise mentors
- Mysterious events surround his departure from this world (suggesting that he may return when his people need him the most)

The Romance Motif Characteristics

(Archetypes)

2

- *A near-perfect hero*
- *An evil enemy*
- *A three-stage quest* (dangerous **journey**, a **test** or **ordeal**, and a **return** to where the journey began—to tell the truth of his adventures/trials)
- **Female figures:** young maidens in need of rescue, old crones, or mothers
- **Magic**/supernatural aspects
- Number 3 (symbolic)
- *Good vs. Evil theme*
- Usually teaches a **moral lesson**
- Faithful follower
- Wise old man
- Dreams
- Betrayal

Qualities/Traits of a “Good Knight”

(fr. Center for Learning)

3

- ❑ Does not battle to attain wealth
- ❑ Does good for the sake of good
- ❑ Generous with his personal possessions (belongings)
- ❑ Corrects wrongs
- ❑ Battles only for a just cause
- ❑ Keeps his word
- ❑ Protects the less fortunate
- ❑ Respects & serves women
- ❑ Merciful
- ❑ Credits God with his good fortune

Qualities/Traits of a “Good Knight”

fr. Le Morte d'Arthur by Sir Thomas Malory

4

- ❑ **TO never** do outrage nor murder
- ❑ **TO** always flee treason
- ❑ **TO by no means** be cruel but to give mercy unto him who asks for mercy
- ❑ **TO** always do ladies, gentlewomen, and widows succor
- ❑ **TO never** force ladies, gentlewomen, or widows
- ❑ **TO NOT** take up battles in wrongful quarrels for love or worldly goods

Qualities/Traits of a “Good Knight”

fr. De Casibus Virorum Illustrium by Giovanni Boccaccio

5

- **TO never** lay down arms
- **TO** seek after wonders
- **TO** defend the rights of the weak with all one’s strength when called upon
- **TO** injure no one
- **TO NOT** attack one another
- **TO** fight for the safety of one’s country
- **TO** give one’s life for one’s country
- **TO** seek nothing before honour
- **TO NEVER** break faith for any reason
- **TO** practice religion most diligently
- **TO** grant hospitality to anyone, each according to his ability
- Whether in honour or disgrace, **TO** make a report with the greatest fidelity to those who keep the annals